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SUBJECT: PRESIDENT RAMOS-HORTA CALLS FOR ASSK RELEASE

REF: DILI 204

¶1. President Jose Ramos-Horta called for the release of Aung San Suu Kyi in a statement released on August 12 (reftel). The president's comments made the front page of the local Tetum language press. Full text is below.

¶2. (Begin text) President and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Jose Ramos-Horta today expresses his deep disappointment at the continuing unjust mistreatment and illegal detention of opposition leader and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

"The sentence against Suu Kyi to continue to stay in house arrest is unfair, unjust, and totally unacceptable, with no basis in any legal system.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners in Burma should be released without any conditions."

President Jose Ramos-Horta will issue a more detailed political comment on Burma in the next few days. (End text.)

¶3. COMMENT: The President feels a special kinship with his fellow Nobel laureate and has spoken out about her mistreatment on multiple occasions. He instinctively remains a human rights campaigner and will use his moral suasion as he is able. Timor-Leste empathizes with the plight of the Burmese opposition but its leverage over the Burmese regime is limited to this type of public condemnation. END COMMENT.

HENICK